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REPORT OF THE SECOND CONFERENCE AND GENERAL MEETING OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR PLANT CONSERVATION[1]

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ABSTRACT

The second conference of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC) was organized by the GPPC, in association with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI). This general meeting was hosted by the Missouri Botanical Garden and was held 5–7 July 2011, in St. Louis, Missouri.

Key words: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC), Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC).

At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 2002) adopted Decision VI/9 on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), which included outcome-oriented global targets for 2010. The ultimate and long-term objective of the Strategy is to halt the current and continuing loss of plant diversity. The aim of the Strategy is to achieve plant conservation, and it is also concerned with aspects of sustainable use, capacity building, and benefit sharing.

The GSPC Expert Group meeting in Dingle, Co. Kerry, Ireland, in October 2003 noted that the Strategy provides a useful framework to bring together organizations and initiatives to meet common objectives and recommended the establishment of a wide global partnership to support its implementation (CBD, 2003).

The Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC) was subsequently launched on 13 February 2004 at a meeting held during the seventh COP of the CBD, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In its Decision VII/10 on the GSPC (CBD, 2004), the COP welcomed the establishment of the GPPC and encouraged the participating organizations to continue to contribute to the implementation of the Strategy. It also invited other organizations to join the Partnership and encouraged Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) to continue its support for the Partnership.

The aim of the Partnership is to support the worldwide implementation of the GSPC, and its objective is to provide a framework to facilitate harmony between existing initiatives aimed at plant conservation, identify gaps where new initiatives are required, and promote mobilization of the necessary resources.

[1] This and the following 13 articles are the proceedings of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation Conference, "Supporting the Worldwide Implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation." The conference was held 5–7 July 2011, at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

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The Partnership also brings together a diversity of groups working in different areas for plant conservation, such as protected areas, species, botanic gardens, agricultural biodiversity, forestry, wetlands, etc.

The COP further welcomed the establishment, by the Executive Secretary, of a flexible coordination mechanism for the Strategy, comprising: liaison groups to be convened as necessary according to established procedures; national focal points, as determined by Parties; the GPPC; and the Secretariat, including the Programme Officer supported by BGCI. It encouraged Parties to nominate focal points, or designate from among existing focal points, for the Strategy in order to promote and facilitate implementation and monitoring of the Strategy at a national level; promote the participation of national stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy at a national level; and facilitate communication among national stakeholders and the Secretariat and GPPC.

In October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the CBD adopted the Updated GSPC 2011–2020 by Decision X/17 (CBD, 2011a). This decision incorporated a consolidated update of the GSPC for the period 2011–2020. This updated GSPC includes 16 targets for plant conservation (CBD, 2011b) to be achieved by 2020 and invites Parties and other governments to develop or update national and regional targets as appropriate and, where appropriate, to incorporate them into relevant plans, programs, and initiatives, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to align the further implementation of the Strategy with national and/or regional efforts to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 (CBD, 2011c).

The first Conference of the GPPC was held in Dublin, Ireland, in October 2005. Working practices for the GPPC were adopted by the GPPC (2005) at its first general meeting held in conjunction with this conference on 25 October 2005 in Dublin.

Introduction

The second conference of the GPPC was held from 5–7 July 2011 in St. Louis, Missouri. The second General Meeting of the GPPC was also held in conjunction with this conference on 7 July 2011. The conference was followed by a meeting of the GSPC Liaison Group, with their report through the CBD (2011d).

The 2011 conference was organized by the GPPC in association with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) and BGCI; it was hosted by the Missouri Botanical Garden. The conference provided information through plenary sessions and strategic discussions to guide future plant conservation priorities in national development agendas with links to the implementation of the CBD's Strategic Plan, as well as providing guidance for countries that are updating national biodiversity strategies. The meeting was designed to showcase examples and share experience from around the world on GSPC implementation, particularly during the period of 2002–2010, to provide guidance and support for national and regional GSPC implementation entering into the new phase; to assist the ongoing efforts to consider and develop further the technical rationales, milestones, and indicators for the GSPC up to 2020; and to harmonize with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 (CBD, 2011e). A key objective of the conference was also to showcase and discuss a draft Toolkit for GSPC implementation.

The conference brought together plant conservation scientists, policymakers, and practitioners representing 27 countries from throughout the world to share methods and results to advance plant conservation measurably. The conference delegates shared their experiences and furthered the development of plant conservation science in the United Nations Decade of Biological Diversity (<www.cbd.int/2011–2020/>).

Opening, Discussions, and Progress

The conference opened with Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson, President of the Missouri Botanical Garden and Chairman of the GPPC, welcoming delegates to St. Louis. He noted with pleasure how many organizations and institutions active in plant conservation around the world were represented at the meeting. He also acknowledged the presence at the conference of Dr. Peter H. Raven, former President of the Missouri Botanical Garden, whose original call for the development of a global initiative for plant conservation to be developed through the United Nations had led to a resolution from the XVIth International Botanical Congress (IBC) in 1999 in St. Louis, Missouri, calling for such a program. Following this IBC, this had been taken forward by a group of botanists at a meeting in Gran Canaria, Spain, who developed an outline of what was later developed and adopted by the United Nation's CBD in April 2002. Dr. Wyse Jackson also recognized Dr. David Bramwell, Director of the Jardín Botánico Canario, Viera y Clavijo, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, who had hosted the landmark Gran Canaria meeting in 2000.

Dr. Wyse Jackson thanked the members of the GPPC for their work in support of the GSPC since the Partnership had been established in 2004 (CBD, 2004). He noted that many members of the Partnership were represented at the conference and thanked participants for having traveled to St. Louis from so many countries to attend this meeting, an important landmark in the development and imple-

mentation of the GSPC, now entering its second phase following the adoption of the updated Strategy at the COP 10 to the CBD in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010.

He noted that the outcomes of the conference would be communicated to and discussed by participants attending the fourth GSPC Liaison Group meeting that would be held also in St. Louis following the conference of 8–9 July (cf. CBD, 2011d). The conference, therefore, presented an important opportunity for many plant conservation practitioners, botanists, and policymakers to ensure that their concerns are communicated to the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), which would receive the Liaison Group's report and recommendations.

Ms. Sara Oldfield, Secretary General of BGCI, welcomed delegates on behalf of BGCI and thanked the Missouri Botanical Garden for hosting the conference. She pointed out the significant responsibilities of the conference to help determine priorities and new effective actions in order to achieve the GSPC targets.

Mr. Robert Höft, Environmental Affairs Officer at the SCBD, also welcomed delegates on behalf of Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaf and read a statement on his behalf (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/speech/2011/sp-2011-07-05-gppc-en.pdf>). In his remarks, Mr. Höft challenged the participants to consider the ways in which the GSPC could be made more relevant to and prominent in political processes worldwide, particularly at national levels, suggesting that only when plant conservation is effectively integrated into programs for sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation will its objectives be fully achieved. He pointed out the need for close operational links to be ensured between the GSPC and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, also adopted by the CBD in October 2010 in Nagoya.

St. Louis Public Radio, part of the National Public Radio network, had a special broadcast recorded live from the conference (<http://www.stlpublicradio.org/programs/slota/archivedetail.php?date='2011-07-06/>). Discussion was about The Future of Plant Conservation between the moderator and four panelists; the moderator took questions from the audience.

The 2011 GPPC Conference included six plenary sessions and eight workshops. Plenary sessions included: (1) the GSPC 2010–2020; (2) understanding and documenting plant diversity; (3) conserving plant diversity; (4) ecological restoration and the GSPC; (5) using plant diversity sustainably; and (6) building capacity for plant conservation. Workshop outcomes and recommendations are discussed below.

GPPC Workshop No. 1: The World Flora: Possibilities and Perspectives—A Stakeholder Consultation

(1) Major assets to complete a World Flora by 2020 include existing data and frameworks: (a) The Plant List to define the list of species to include in the World Flora; (b) more than 250 years of published floras, treatments, and monographs; and (c) the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group APG3 classification system (Stevens, 2001 onward) to define family-level framework.

(2) A major constraint for the GSPC Target 1, "an online flora of all known plants" (CBD, 2011b), is the 2020 deadline for delivery. Attendees acknowledged that achieving 100% completeness may be impossible, but believe that 80% completeness with 100% confidence in product could possibly be achieved. They also agreed that the project must leverage existing floras and datasets and do new fieldwork and taxonomic research only where data gaps occur.

(3) The World Flora should include a minimum set of required fields while maintaining high-quality, trustworthy data. The content should be defined by a working group who will take under consideration the audience for the project.

(4) Human capacity building is a key activity in delivering the World Flora, as the project has the potential to engage hundreds, if not thousands, of taxonomists, parataxonomists, students, and citizen scientists from all over the world. It is important to consider the human resources needed to execute the project as well as the resources needed post-2020.

(5) Building networks will be a key factor to achieve the GSPC Target 1, and participating institutions should work in areas of the world where they have regional or monographic focus.

(6) Tools for collaborative work should be developed, such as an interactive web site and application programming interfaces for data use.

GPPC Workshop No. 2: The GSPC Toolkit—A Discussion Workshop

(1) The GSPC Toolkit (CBD, 2013) should include clear links to the CBD Strategic Plan Targets (CBD, 2011b) and to show the relevance of the GSPC in the context of national biodiversity strategies. Also included is basic information to explain why individual countries need to develop implementation strategies.

(2) The GSPC Toolkit should encourage individual organizations to take responsibility for specific GSPC targets and to help with peer review and quality control.

(3) The GSPC Toolkit should provide different entry points for different users to help them navigate more efficiently around the site.

(4) Off-line access is important; therefore, the GSPC Toolkit should consider generating a series of short publications that would be practical to produce and to update. Although a wiki-based approach and smart-phone accessibility are not taken initially, these should be considered in the longer term.

(5) Stakeholders could help to translate materials that are useful to make them available in different languages, although most resources should be made available in the language in which they are prepared.

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 3: RED LISTING AND ACHIEVING THE GSPC TARGET 2

(1) Much greater progress toward achieving the GSPC Target 2, "an assessment of the conservation status of all known plant species, as far as possible, to guide conservation action" (CBD, 2011b), has been made than is currently realized, i.e., as perceived only through the lens of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List (IUCN, 2001, 2012), which includes just 17,604 plant species, or still only 5.7% of the estimated total. In fact, well over 100,000 plant species (Wyse Jackson, pers. obs.) have been assessed at either the global or national level for their conservation status in the past 25 years, many using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, but also many others using different assessment systems. There is an urgent need to record and synthesize all of these assessments in an accessible online database to better inform conservation actions.

(2) Assessors should be strongly encouraged to use the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (IUCN, 2001, 2012) for future assessments. However, in order to expedite the incorporation of assessments on to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, it is suggested that IUCN should further review, revise, and clarify the minimum documentation standards required for inclusion on the Red List.

(3) Assessors should be strongly encouraged to use the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (IUCN, 2001, 2012) for future assessments. However, in order to expedite the incorporation of assessments within the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, it is suggested that the IUCN should further review, revise, and clarify the minimum documentation standards required for inclusion on to the Red List.

(4) For the majority of plant species that are most likely of lesser conservation concern, more rapid assessment of their nonthreatened status can and should be achieved.

(5) The online World Flora (GSPC Target 1, CBD, 2011b) is the most appropriate place to attach and/or link conservation assessments of all plant species. Therefore, as the development of the World Flora moves forward, it is essential that considerations on how to link to existing online databases of conservation status, e.g., IUCN Red List or NatureServe (National Biological Information Infrastructure [NBII], 2013), as well as how to incorporate assessments that are not online, be addressed.

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 4: ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND THE GSPC

(1) Follow The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB, 2013; e.g., Wittmer et al., 2013) strategy of producing documents to explain the GSPC for five audiences: (a) scientists and professionals, (b) national and international policymakers, (c) corporate leaders and decision makers, (d) local and regional administrators, and (e) private consumers and citizens.

(2) Develop a framework to summarize, assess, promote, and multiply broad, integrated plant conservation and ecological restoration efforts that contribute to achieving the GSPC targets (CBD, 2011b). A summary of current efforts is needed to engage organizations, corporations, and institutions, and to help leverage resources for additional efforts and collaborations.

(3) Promote and link the long-standing efforts of the Society for Ecological Restoration, the GPPC, and others. Develop, document, and expand an international network of Long-term Ecological Restoration (LTER) areas (LTER Network, 2013). Encourage links with the work of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in the area of ecological restoration (IUCN, 2013).

(4) The tools developed for implementing the GSPC targets and for achieving the GSPC Objectives (CBD, 2011b) should encourage and promote the use of the terms ecological restoration and Restoring Natural Capital (RNC), as used by TEEB and the RNC Network (Aronson et al., 2013).

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 5: TECHNICAL RATIONALES, MILESTONES FOR THE GSPC TARGETS—LINKING WITH THE CBD STRATEGIC PLAN

(1) The GSPC Technical Rationales (CBD, 2011e) are very useful to practitioners in explaining the GSPC targets to other stakeholders, including donors and policymakers in particular, as they explain the importance of the individual targets while also showing how the 16 targets link together into a plan.

(2) The GSPC Technical Rationales help users to define indicators and identify relevant stakeholders.

(3) These Technical Rationales should include explicit links to the CBD Strategic Plan (CBD, 2011c, 2011e). They should also provide the entry point for more detailed information as would be available, e.g., from the GSPC Toolkit.

(4) Technical Rationales should be kept brief and should be included in key materials about the GSPC (brochures and posters).

(5) Technical Rationales need to be made available as soon as possible in all the official languages of the CBD.

(6) If possible, GSPC Technical Rationales should include information on progress to date, suggested milestones, and indicators of success.

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 6: LINKING THE GSPC AT AN INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL—A DISCUSSION WORKSHOP

(1) Insofar as possible, institutions should use the GSPC Objectives (CBD, 2011b) as a guide to help recognize their strengths and the work they are already doing in the conservation arena.

(2) Institutions should also use, as possible, the GSPC as a framework to build on these strengths and to set institutional priorities for the future, with the understanding that individual institutions need not necessarily address each GSPC target (CBD, 2011b).

(3) Institutions should make special efforts to work with their government representatives to raise awareness of and enlist support for advancing the GSPC.

(4) Institutions should use, as they can, the GSPC as a framework to integrate programs across the institution.

(5) Institutions should request that the SCBD invite the Parties to comply with the decision they have adopted to include the GSPC as part of their commitment to the CBD. They should also encourage the Parties to include the GSPC targets in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

(6) Institutions should develop networks, partnerships, or other types of institutional collaborations adapted to the particular situation of each country and capable of carrying out work in plant conservation to help realize the GSPC targets. To implement these collaborations, it will be important to find ways to identify and support individuals who will spur the formation of these collaborations.

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 7: THE GSPC, ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING, AND THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL

(1) The GPPC and individual organizations could provide educational opportunities around the operations and the documentation necessary for compliance and best practices in plant conservation. The GPPC could also play a role, through the member organizations, in the education of decision makers.

(2) The GPPC could play a greater role in representing the plant conservation community at meetings of Parties and negotiations. In addition, individual organizations should monitor and lobby to ensure that national laws remain open to scientific exchange of material.

(3) With regard to Article 10 ("Global Multilateral Benefit-Sharing Mechanism") and Article 11 ("Transboundary Cooperation") of the Nagoya Protocol (CBD, 2011f), the GPPC could play an important role in advocating for simplification to make securing prior informed consent easier.

(4) There is a need to focus efforts on the opportunities presented by the Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) framework (CBD, 2011g), rather than on the challenges of obtaining genetic material.

(5) Benefits should be outlined from existing projects to provide a context for negotiation toward securing genetic material. It would be important to develop case studies, in particular cases that illustrate work conducted by those countries with large plant diversity that can provide guidance to others on maintaining open exchange of genetic material, as examples to help decision makers.

(6) Institutions should be more cognizant as a group not to make mistakes with negotiations and in the handling of plant material. In recognizing that a single institution can have a wider effect on the way in which institutions from an entire country could be viewed, the GPPC and individual institutions could help in raising awareness and providing support.

GPPC WORKSHOP NO. 8: PUBLIC AWARENESS AND THE GSPC

(1) The workshop focused primarily on the role of botanic gardens in public awareness on plant conservation and the GSPC. If botanic gardens are already collectively playing host to 250 million visitors a year, they should invest in ensuring that those 250 million visitors have an enriching, enlightening, and inspiring experience as possible.

(2) Botanic gardens should personalize learning opportunities and give people the opportunity to connect with the message in ways relevant to them. To make bigger impacts in the communities that they serve, botanical gardens should focus their message on targeted audiences and on specific groups whose decisions and actions can have long-term, significant conservation impacts.

(3) Botanic gardens should mobilize themselves in a way that leverages their collective reach. For example, if botanical gardens had e-mail addresses

for all 250 million visitors worldwide in one massive e-mail list, these institutions, through perhaps BGCI, could communicate and share discussions with patrons and visitors in entirely new ways.

(4) Botanic gardens should create a global campaign. With the diversity of media channels available today (social and traditional), botanic gardens should mount and disseminate a global campaign focused on the role of plants in human life.

Business Meeting

The meeting was opened by Dr. Wyse Jackson, Chair of the GPPC. Ms. Suzanne Sharrock (BGCI and GPPC Secretariat) acted as rapporteur for the meeting. The agenda for the meeting was as follows: (a) future priorities and role, (b) structure and membership, (c) election of officers, and (d) other business.

(a) future priorities and role

Discussion noted that various options exist for the future role of the GPPC by (a) maintaining the status quo, (b) developing a specific work program, (c) playing a direct role in supporting the development of the GSPC Toolkit, (d) focusing on communications, and (e) the sharing of resources between members. It was recommended that the presentations made during the GPPC Conference should be made publically available. It was also noted that Missouri Botanical Garden was considering publishing the proceedings of the conference in an issue of the *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*.

Discussion pursued that the GPPC could play an important role in providing resources and advising and facilitating with the GSPC Toolkit. The issue of facilitating agencies for each GSPC target was discussed. It was believed that a wider number of institutions should now be engaged around each target and that among other tasks (e.g., monitoring and reporting on implementation progress), they should have a specific focus on supporting toolkit development. It was, therefore, recommended that the GPPC should establish a series of working groups, which would focus either on specific targets of the GSPC or on the broader objectives of the GSPC. The plans and objectives of these working groups would be developed by the GPPC Chair and circulated among the membership, together with a request for members to participate in the working groups. It was suggested that each working group should nominate a Chair who would act as the main liaison between the working group, the GPPC Chair, and the GSPC Toolkit administrator.

It was agreed that the document Working Practices of the GPPC should be revised and updated within the 2020 framework. The Chair of the GPPC will circulate this document to members, requesting comments and suggestions for updates. The updated draft of this document is included in Annex 1. This draft includes the modalities for the proposed GPPC working groups.

(b) structure and membership

Following discussion on the size of membership of the Partnership, it was agreed that structure and membership should be allowed to evolve naturally, with consideration given to increasing the scope and area of expertise of the members, e.g., by encouraging greater participation from the agriculture and forestry sectors.

(c) election of officers

The business meetings of the GPPC provide the opportunity for the GPPC Chair and Secretariat to be elected. Because there were no new nominations for either of these positions, it was agreed that Dr. Wyse Jackson would continue as Chair of the GPPC, and BGCI would continue to provide the secretariat until the next general meeting of the partnership.

(d) other business

The question of support for the GPPC Chair was raised, noting that up to now support has been informal, but the GSPC Liaison Group has played a role. With the formation of GPPC working groups, the Chairs of the working groups would be able to support the GPPC Chair. Dr. Wyse Jackson informed that he would look for additional institutional support from among the membership, including the Missouri Botanical Garden, where the office of the GPPC Chair would be maintained.

Following the completion of the General Meeting the conference was closed.

Conference Attendees and Program

A list of the GPPC Conference participants is provided at <https://mbgserv18.mobot.org/ocs/index.php/gppc/gppcstl/about/editorialPolicies#custom-0>.

The conference program and schedule, including the abstracts of presentations, are respectively provided at <https://mbgserv18.mobot.org/ocs/index.php/gppc/gppcstl/schedConf/program> and <https://mbgserv18.mobot.org/ocs/index.php/gppc/gppcstl/schedConf/schedule>.

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Annex 1. Updated Working Practices of the GPPC. The annex can be accessed at <http://www.plants2020.net/gppcworking-practices/>.

Introduction

1. The GPPC brings together international, regional, and national organizations in order to contribute to the implementation of the GSPC of the CBD. The Partnership aims to support the GSPC. The inaugural meeting of the Partnership was held as a side event of the seventh meeting of the

Conference of the Parties of the Convention in Kuala Lumpur in February 2004. The Conference of the Parties welcomed the establishment of the Partnership.

2. This note outlines the establishment of the Partnership and its Working Practices in relation to its aims, membership, functions, working modalities, chairmanship and secretariat, meetings and reporting.

3. Originally adopted by the GPPC at its first general meeting held in Dublin, Ireland, on 25 October 2005, this draft includes possible updates and revisions to be considered by the GPPC membership in response to the adoption by the CBD of an updated GSPC in November 2010 and the incorporation of GSPC targets for 2020.

4. It is noted that nothing in this Working Practices document should be read to contradict the principles of the CBD. Furthermore, it is recognized and accepted that this document is not legally binding and will have no effect as a legal or political precedent.

Establishment

5. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD adopted Decision VI/9 on the GSPC, which includes outcome-oriented global targets for 2010. The ultimate and long-term objective of the Strategy is to halt the current and continuing loss of plant diversity. While the entry point for the Strategy is plant conservation, it is also concerned with aspects of sustainable use, capacity building, and benefit-sharing.

6. The GSPC Expert Group meeting in Dingle, Co. Kerry, Ireland, in October 2003 noted that "the Strategy is providing a useful framework to bring together organizations and initiatives to meet common objectives. Various organizations are already working towards the respective targets, and where possible, they are incorporating actions towards achieving targets into existing work programs. The need for wider partnerships has been noted, and to achieve this, mechanisms by which a wider group of organizations could be involved in the process are needed, with the emphasis being given to a partnership approach within the Strategy as a whole, rather than a specific target-related involvement" (CBD, 2003: 7; UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/24). The GSPC Expert Group, therefore, recommended that a global partnership for plant conservation be established, building upon the Gran Canaria Group, an informal consortium of international and national organizations that came together in 2000 to support the development of a global strategy for plant conservation. The Expert Group further proposed that a global partnership for plant conservation be open to all organizations that can contribute to the implementation of the Strategy.

7. In February 2004, in its Decision VII/10 on the GSPC, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the establishment of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation and encouraged the participating organizations to continue to contribute to the implementation of the Strategy. It also invited other organizations to join the Partnership and encouraged BGCI to continue its support for the Partnership.

8. The Conference of the Parties further welcomed the establishment, by the Executive Secretary, of a flexible coordination mechanism for the Strategy, comprising: liaison groups to be convened as necessary according to established procedures; national focal points, as determined by Parties; the GPPC; and the Secretariat, including the Programme Officer supported by BGCI. It encouraged Parties to nominate focal points, or designate from among existing focal points, for the Strategy in order to promote and facilitate implementation and monitoring of the Strategy at a national level; promote the participation of national stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy at national level; and facilitate communication between national stakeholders and the Secretariat and GPPC.

9. The Partnership launched at an event held on 13 February 2004 during the 7th Meeting of the Conferences of Parties to the CBD in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The establishment of the Partnership was welcomed by the CBD Executive Secretary and by representatives of a range of national and international organizations.

Aim of the Partnership

10. The aim of the Partnership is to support the worldwide implementation of the GSPC and its objective to provide a framework to facilitate harmony between existing initiatives aimed at plant conservation, identify gaps where new initiatives are required, and promote mobilization of the necessary resources. The Partnership also brings together a diversity of groups working in different areas for plant conservation, such as protected areas, species, botanic gardens, agricultural biodiversity, forestry, wetlands, etc.

Working Modalities

11. The Partnership represents a voluntary commitment by participating organizations to a common cause, the GSPC, who have agreed to come together in the framework of a GPPC to support the GSPC implementation. Furthermore, it is recognized that the Partnership does not seek to compromise the independence of any of its participating organizations but aims to create synergies and add value to existing initiatives, particularly in support of national GSPC implementation and in supporting efforts being made by Parties in responding to the GSPC.

12. The Partnership recognizes and accepts that guidance in relation to the GSPC are set by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and its subsidiary bodies. Further, it acknowledges its role in the flexible coordination mechanism of the GSPC. The activities of the Partnership will be consistent with guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies and take account of advice provided through the flexible coordination mechanism.

13. The Partnership may play a role in identifying gaps so that individual organizations and institutions may then take a lead in developing projects to help address those gaps within the broad, flexible framework provided by the Partnership, involving organizations both within and outside the Partnership as appropriate. The Partnership will seek to focus on enhancing projects and other activities that respond to the GSPC and support its implementation, particularly at national levels rather than endorsing specific projects.

14. The activities of the Partnership are outlined in a program of activities prepared and agreed on from time to time by the members.

15. An important role of the Partnership will be to enhance communication and collaboration between participating organizations. The priority will be to minimize duplication of effort and maximize on available limited resources and ensure clarity in communication such as in relation to approaches to donors.

16. Every effort will be made to ensure that the Partnership remains as flexible and non-bureaucratic as possible and able to adapt easily and respond to changing circumstances and opportunities.

17. Participating organizations of the Partnership will encourage cooperation among themselves in the implementation of the GSPC and the implementation of the programs of

activities of the Partnership in areas of mutual interest and with other appropriate bodies, to avoid duplication and to benefit from existing resources and expertise.

18. The approach of the Partnership will be: (a) to operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner; (b) to share information on policies, programs, and activities among its participating organizations; (c) to encourage active participation in the implementation of the GSPC and the program of activities of the Partnership at all levels; and (d) to hold regular meetings and ensure other communication among its participating organizations to consider and agree on its activities and ongoing arrangements.

Membership

19. The Partnership consists of organizations, institutions, secretariats, and other bodies that have substantial programs in plant conservation, all of which shall be eligible for membership.

20. Any bona fide organizations and institutions, including governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), indigenous peoples organizations (IPOs), and the private sector, that are playing an important role in supporting the implementation of the GSPC, are invited to participate in the Partnership. Membership is open to all bodies that endorse the objectives of the GPPC and are committed to facilitating and promoting its implementation, unless the participation of that organization in the Partnership would be likely to jeopardize the aims of the Partnership.

21. Organizations may become members by an exchange of letters between a responsible official of the organization and the Chair of the Partnership. The letter from the applying organization should endorse the GSPC and accept the aims and Working Practices of the Partnership.

22. The Chair will acknowledge the membership of the body joining the Partnership. The name of the new member will then be added to the list of members of the Partnership maintained on the Partnership web site (<www.plants2020.org>). If the bona fide nature of the application of the applicant organization is in doubt, the Chair may consult with the Vice Chairs, and if necessary with the other members of the Partnership, before accepting a membership application.

23. Organizations may withdraw from the Partnership by informing the Chair in writing of their withdrawal. Organizations may also be withdrawn from membership by the Partnership itself by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a General Meeting.

Functions of the Partnership

24. The functions of the GPPC include: (a) to support the Executive Secretary of the CBD, the Parties, and the flexible coordination mechanism for the GSPC to implement the Strategy and help monitor progress in the achievement of the 16 outcome targets by 2020; (b) to promote the implementation of the GSPC through the activities and initiatives of its participating organizations, other partners, and associated networks; (c) to support the development of collaborative initiatives among its members in support of the achievement of the GSPC targets; (d) to support the development and implementation of national and regional strategies for plant conservation and strengthen integration of the elements and targets of the GSPC into sectoral and institutional programs and initiatives; (e) to stimulate, encourage, and support the development of national partnerships for plant conservation; (f) to assist in the development and dissemination of relevant models with protocols for plant conservation, best practices and case studies and provide relevant scientific and technical tools where available, for the implementation of the GSPC; (g) to participate in the flexible coordination mechanism of the GSPC as established by the CBD Executive Secretary; (h) to participate in the development and maintenance of a Toolkit on GSPC implementation; (i) to maintain a web site on the plant conservation activities of its members worldwide, as a resource for interaction and communication between initiatives and organizations active in plant conservation, working in close collaboration with the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD; (j) to identify gaps where new initiatives are required; (k) to support capacity building initiatives for plant conservation especially in developing countries; (l) to facilitate education and public awareness on plant conservation and the GSPC; and (m) to maximize and mobilize existing and new resources to support the implementation of the Strategy at all levels.

Chair and Secretariat

25. A Chair for the Partnership is elected at the General Meetings of the Partnership.

26. Any changes to the arrangements for the Partnership will be agreed by the Partners and adopted at its General Meetings. A Secretariat for the Partnership shall be selected or designated also at General Meetings. The term of office of the Chair and any other officers chosen will be from one General Meeting to the next.

Meetings

27. The primary governing and decision-making body of the Partnership will be at its General Meetings. The General Meetings will be the means by which the participating organizations will make collective decisions on all matters relating to the GPPC, which will then be put into effect by the GPPC Secretariat. The Partnership's activities will be guided by the General Meetings. General Meetings will be held from time to time, if possible no less than once every three years, convened by the Chair. All members will be invited to be represented at a General Meeting. The General Meeting should strive to work by consensus whenever possible. If consensus cannot be reached after reasonable attempts have been made, then in exceptional circumstances a decision may be approved by a majority vote of those members present at a General Meeting. All members present at a General Meeting will be entitled to one vote.

28. The General Meetings may: (a) agree on the activities that will be undertaken by the Partnership for the period between General Meetings or for other agreed periods of time. The Partnership may, by consensus, make adjustments to these activities at any time; (b) agree on practices as may be required for the sound management of the Partnership's activities, while assuring adherence to this document and to the principles of the CBD and GSPC; (c) appoint a Chair and other officers and select or designate a Secretariat; (d) consider any matters pertaining to the GPPC or its operations and the GSPC as submitted to it by the Executive Secretary of the CBD, the GPPC Secretariat, or by any member; (e) establish Working Groups to support, advise on, and help monitor the achievement of individual or groups of targets of the GSPC and to contribute to and support, as appropriate, the development and maintenance of the GSPC Toolkit. General Meetings may be supplemented by occasional meetings held by teleconference and/or electronic communications.

Working Groups

29. The establishment of Working Groups to support, advise on, and help monitor the achievement of the GSPC 2020 targets was agreed at the second General Meeting of the Partnership.

30. A series of Working Groups are constituted for each of the first four GSPC Objectives, viz: (a) Objective I, plant diversity is well understood, documented and recognized; (b) Objective II, plant diversity is urgently and effectively conserved; (c) Objective III, plant diversity is used in a sustainable and equitable manner; and, (d) Objective IV, education and awareness about plant diversity, its role in sustainable livelihoods, and importance to all life on Earth is promoted.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR WORKING GROUPS

31. The terms of reference of Working Groups are as follows.

(a) Provide advice to the Executive Secretary to the CBD on, inter alia, the technical terms and rationale for each target. Such advice may be provided either directly to the Executive Secretary or as part of consultations undertaken at Liaison Group meeting, through the flexible coordination mechanism.

(b) Assist in the development and maintenance of the GSPC Toolkit, including: (i) help in identifying existing tools for inclusion; (ii) document case studies and information on best practices supporting the development of new plant conservation tools that may not currently exist to support GSPC implementation and to address identified gaps; (iii) develop and implement opportunities to disseminate the use of the Toolkit for the development of national and regional responses to the GSPC; and (iv) provide advice for the incorporation of the GSPC and its targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

(c) Assist in monitoring progress toward the achievement of the GSPC 2020 targets, including any indicators and milestones identified and existing baselines.

(d) Identify capacity-building and networking needs for the achievement of the GSPC targets and support, encourage, advise on, and assist in the implementation of capacity-building measures at all levels.

(e) Promote a wider understanding and awareness of the GSPC and its targets for 2020 among the botanical, conservation, and broader environmental communities.

(f) Contribute toward updates of the Plant Conservation Report and periodic other reviews of the GSPC and its progress.

32. Additional cross-cutting Working Groups may be established as needed on a permanent or temporary basis by the GPPC membership to address particular topics, such as emerging issues, items of more general importance to the GSPC, or to consider matters for which the Executive Secretary has requested specific advice.

MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUPS

33. Participation in these Working Groups is open to all members of the GPPC. Nevertheless, it is expected that organizations and institutions will participate primarily in the Working Groups where they have a direct interest and specific expertise and involvement.

34. Each Working Group will appoint a Chair and Secretary who will liaise directly with the membership of the Working Group to manage and organize the work of the Group. The Chair and Secretary will also liaise with and report to the GPPC Chair and Secretariat, with the aim of reporting on progress, activities, and outcomes of the work of the Group. The Chair and Secretary will be appointed by the membership of the Working Group and with the agreement of the GPPC Chair. Such appointments shall generally be by consensus. If an appointment cannot be made by consensus, then a Working Group Chair may be appointed by the GPPC Chair after consultation with the full GPPC membership.

35. Working Group Chairs may invite the participation of a limited number of technical advisors or experts as observers when they may be able to contribute information or perspectives on the work of the Group that might not otherwise be available to it from within the membership of the GPPC.

36. It is expected that where a GPPC member wishes to be involved in a specific Working Group, the member will nominate one named individual to the GPPC Chair (or GPPC Secretariat). In the event that the nominated named individual is unable to participate in a specific meeting or activity of the Working Group, the GPPC member may nominate an alternative named individual.

37. The term of office of any member of a Working Group shall be from one GPPC General Meeting to the next.

38. The names of participating organizations and their representatives in each Working Group will be included in the GPPC web site.

MEANS OF WORKING

39. These Working Groups may operate by means of meetings, workshops, and other events, as well as using electronic and other communication tools.

40. Working Groups may also decide, if they wish, to constitute permanent or temporary task forces or committees to consider and advise on specific issues or individual or groups of targets. These subgroups will report to the Chair of the Group.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING

41. Communications between the Working Groups and the SCBD will normally be via the GPPC Chair and Secretariat.

42. Working Groups will be expected to provide an update on their work to the GPPC Chair on at least an annual basis.

Reporting

43. No formal reporting requirements will be required of members of the Partnership, except within the context of the activities of the Working Groups. However, participating organizations are encouraged to provide relevant information regularly, particularly relating to existing or planned activities concerning the implementation of the GPPC program of activities, or other policies, activities, and initiatives relevant to GSPC implementation. Such contributions can be included in or linked to the GPPC web site and made available to the Executive Secretary of the CBD, the Parties, and the flexible coordination mechanism for the GSPC to implement the Strategy and help monitor progress in the achievement of the 16 outcome targets by 2020.